

January 5, 1998



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Mr. Lester Snow  
Executive Director  
CALFED Bay-Delta Program  
1416 Ninth Street, Suite 1155  
Sacramento, CA 95814

Dear Lester:

Congratulations on CALFED's decision to temporarily hold off naming a preferred alternative. Right answer, right reason! As you predicted in nearly every one of your major public appearances, the interested parties have gotten more than a little rancorous as the moment of truth looms closer and closer. The excessive rancor over the possibility of an isolated facility was totally predictable.

The purpose of this letter is to offer what I believe is a fairly simple way to legitimately address the sincere concerns of us in the Delta regarding a suitable levee protection plan. Everyone seems to agree that a significant commitment to in-Delta levee restoration should be a part of any plan. Yet, in fiscal year 1997-98 nearly all of the SB 34 funds were stripped from the program. It was only an eleventh hour effort that accelerated funding through Prop 204. The SB 34 program runs out of money in fiscal year 1999 and has only \$6 million budgeted for next year's (fiscal year 1998) effort. The reclamation districts simply cannot plan effectively or spend money efficiently when funding is so iffy and sporadic. I strongly suggest that CALFED commit to early funding for levee restoration just as it has committed to early funding for ecosystem restoration. I do not know how this can best be facilitated, but certainly if the top-level CALFED participants all support emergency legislation, I am sure that funding can be forthcoming. If CALFED takes quick action to remedy this problem, it can gain the high ground on this subject. On the other hand, if nothing more than long-term plans for levee restoration remain a part of the CALFED program and the Delta interests have to pursue new funding for an SB 34 type program, the high ground could be lost and the strong suspicions will remain.

Thank you for considering this thought.

Sincerely,

John L. Winther  
President

JLW:kf

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